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FOR NEA/ARP AND S/CT

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/08/2019
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [CASC](#) [KAWC](#) [AF](#) [QA](#)
SUBJECT: EMBASSY'S NEW LINGUISTIC CAPABILITIES USED ON
HOSTAGE VIDEO

Classified By: AMBASSADOR JOSEPH E. LEBARON, FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D
) .

(C) KEY POINTS

-- On February 6, in one of its hourly news bulletins, Al Jazeera Arabic aired a clip showing American kidnap victim and New York Times reporter David Rohde making political demands of the USG. The video, which showed Rohde seated and talking for several seconds, then walking through the snow, was accompanied by a voice-over by Al Jazeera's Doha anchor.

-- Al Jazeera permitted Embassy staff to review the footage in their studios on February 6-7, including Dari, Pashtu and Urdu linguists from the National Virtual Translation Center (NVTC), a new element of the U.S. Mission in Doha. Embassy has provided details of that review to S/CT and NEA/ARP.

-- Al Jazeera executives stated that the recording would be made available at Al Jazeera's New York bureau for New York Times editors and Rohde's family members to view, and in Washington for USG officials.

(C) COMMENTS

-- Drawing on the extraordinary depth of regional linguistic and cultural capabilities now at the Embassy, we intend to monitor, review and report on recordings received by Al Jazeera -- whether involving AMCIIT kidnapping victims or other subjects -- that could be of interest to the USG.

-- ILiAD, the Integrated Linguistic Activity in Doha, a regional resource comprised of the Combined Media Processing Center, the National Virtual Translation Center, and the Open Source Center, is coming under Embassy Doha's NSDD-38 authority. Nearly 200 linguists, who collectively have native speaker capabilities in virtually all of the major languages of the broader Middle East, form the core of ILiAD.

END KEY POINTS AND COMMENTS

1. (U) During an hourly news bulletin on February 6, Al Jazeera broadcast several seconds of video footage obtained from their Kabul bureau of New York Times journalist David Rohde, an American citizen, speaking directly to the camera, then walking in the snow outside a crude shelter. The Doha-based anchor provided a voice-over noting that it was Rohde, that he had been kidnapped in Afghanistan, and remained in Taliban captivity.

¶2. (C) Emboff and three linguists specializing in Dari, Pashtu and Farsi from NVTC reviewed the 18 minutes of footage received by Al Jazeera at their Doha studios on February 6 and 7. (NOTE: The results of this review were later provided to S/CT and NEA/ARP. END NOTE)

¶3. (C) Deputy Newsroom Chief Ayman Jaballah stated that that video had been made available to New York Times editors in New York and that USG representatives in Washington were welcome to view it at the Al Jazeera bureau there.
LeBaron